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ABSTRACT

This document presents a policy framework designed to foster action to prevent youth victimization and the likelihood that youth living in high risk situations will engage in adolescent and/or later life criminal behavior. It applies to youth ages 12 to 18 years. Eight sections include: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "Policy Background" (a focus on early intervention and models of prevention: transforming knowledge into action); (3) "The Role of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention"; (4) "Key Policy Concerns" (interplay among risk factors at individual, family, and community levels; key challenges; and optimal points of intervention); (5) "Guiding Principles" (e.g., focus on youth and families living in conditions of multiple risk and engage youth and their support systems in the process); (6) "Goals and Objectives" (foster community action, promote conditions that will prevent youth victimization, and the probability of current or later life criminal behavior); (7) "Components" (public awareness and education, comprehensive strategies and models, tools and resource development, and research and knowledge development); and (8) "Funding Overview." Two appendixes present data on crime prevention and childhood experiences, situations, and potential adverse consequences; factors that contribute to positive outcomes for children and youth; and the funding focus. (SM)

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ED 461 704

POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING CRIME PREVENTION AND YOUTH AGES 12 TO 18

NATIONAL STRATEGY
ON COMMUNITY SAFETY
AND CRIME PREVENTION

NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION CENTRE
JUNE 2000

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Policy framework for Addressing Crime Prevention and Youth Ages 12 to 18

National Strategy
on Community Safety
and Crime Prevention

National Crime Prevention Centre
June 2000

Canada

Également disponible en français sous le titre :
Cadre stratégique pour la prévention du crime chez les adolescents âgés de 12 à 18 ans.

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The National Crime Prevention Centre, located within the Department of Justice, is responsible for implementing the *National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention*, in partnership with the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada.

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Policy Framework for Crime Prevention and Youth: Funding Focus

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to present a Policy Framework to foster action that will prevent youth victimization and reduce the likelihood that youth living in situations of risk will engage in criminal behaviour during adolescence or in later life stages. This Policy Framework has been developed at the request of the National Steering Committee on Community Safety and Crime Prevention.

Investing crime prevention resources in youth is an established priority of Phase II of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention, announced in 1998. Phase II has a special emphasis on building partnerships, and supporting community-designed and implemented crime prevention initiatives.[1] Within that context, the Policy Framework to address youth crime prevention will assist the National Crime Prevention Centre in identifying, managing and, ultimately, funding priority issues.

This Policy Framework applies to youth ages 12 to 18.[2] Youth are an established priority of Phase II of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention. The National Crime Prevention Centre intends to implement this Policy Framework in conjunction with complementary policy frameworks for the Strategy's other priorities—children (ages 0 to 12), Aboriginal populations and women and girls' personal security.

The Strategy is part of an evolving approach that involves many players—governments, First Nations, communities, non-governmental organizations, professional organizations, the private sector, and individuals—among others, in fostering the healthy, secure, pro-social development of youth and communities. It operates within the context of the National Children's Agenda and the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Social Union Agreement. It acknowledges that provincial and territorial governments and other federal departments have key responsibilities in promoting health and social development of youth. It recognizes that community safety and the positive social development of youth are linked, and that integrated approaches across sectors are desirable. The Strategy is linked to the Youth Justice Renewal Strategy that emphasizes a balance among the needs to prevent youth crime, ensure there are meaningful consequences when youth commit offences, and improve rehabilitation and reintegration strategies when youth come into conflict with the law. The Strategy helps communities create and maintain safe and violence-free environments that will enable youth to make a positive transition into adulthood, assume responsibility and participate fully in Canadian society.

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1 Under the Strategy, "community" can be defined in either geographic terms such as neighbourhoods or towns, or as shared goals/experiences.

2 Although "to age 18" is the upper age limit of the Policy Framework for Addressing Crime Prevention and Youth, the National Strategy may also address crime prevention issues concerning young at-risk adults.

It focuses on secondary prevention, particularly community efforts to address the multiplicity of risk factors that contribute to:

- youth victimization; and
- adolescent and/or later life criminal behaviour.

B. Organization of this Document

This document provides an overview of:

- the policy background concerning youth and crime prevention;
- the role of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention;
- key policy concerns;
- guiding principles;
- goal and objectives;
- components and funding focus.

2. POLICY BACKGROUND

A. A Focus on Crime Prevention

Youth and Risk Factors Related to Crime and Victimization

Crime prevention efforts involving youth are intended to help youth make the transition from adolescence to adulthood and self-sufficiency in a pro-social manner. This approach calls for multi-faceted interventions that deal with situations that place youth at risk of victimization as well as interventions that will help youth who are engaging in behaviours that put them into conflict with the law. There are myriad links among factors that put a youth at risk of victimization or offending. A well-established body of research has shown a range of factors that place youth at risk of victimization, and also factors that place youth at risk of coming into conflict with the law. These include poverty, family violence, health and behaviour problems, poor school performance, and parental substance abuse, among others. Individual factors such as effective coping skills and a sense of hope—as well as factors such as support from family members, caregivers, friends, teachers and the broader community—can play a critical role in crime prevention.

A summary of factors that contribute to adverse consequences, and factors that lead to positive outcomes is included in Appendix A. Life experiences, as well as patterns of victimization and behaviour, are significantly different for young men and young women, and vary by other factors such age, race, culture, Aboriginal status, sexual orientation, class background, disability and living situation (e.g., presence of violence/abuse, substance abuse/addictions in the home).

It is important to remember that the great majority of young offenders are involved in relatively minor property offences or in fights such as schoolyard scuffles. During 1997,

of the 111,736 youth charged with crimes, more than half were charged with property crimes, often minor vandalism or shoplifting. Twenty-seven percent of youth charges fell into categories such as mischief, and administration of justice offences like failing to appear in court or to comply with a previous sentence. Twenty percent of youth charges were for violent crimes. Of these, fully half were for common assaults in which no one was injured. Less than 0.1% of youths (54) charged in 1997 were accused of homicide.[3]

About 4% of all young offenders were charged with major assault, including assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm. Robbery accounted for only 3% of the total charged. It is also important to note that youth are frequently the victims of youth crime. In 1997, more than half (56%) of all victims of youth violence were other youth. While persistent offenders—those who have been repeatedly in conflict with the law—are of primary concern, they represent only a small proportion of youth who come into conflict with the law.[4]

B. Models of Prevention: Transforming Knowledge into Action

Under Phase I of the Strategy, the National Crime Prevention Council developed a set of crime prevention models that identify the factors that:

- place youth at risk of victimization;
- contribute to offending behaviour among youth; and
- foster resiliency—the ability to cope with adversity.

Table 1: Crime Prevention Model: 12 to 18 Years of Age[5]

Level	Goals	Means
Society	Make the promotion of healthy families and communities a priority for all levels of society.	Strengthen financial commitment to education, health and social welfare programs. Eliminate child/family poverty. Promote family friendly workplaces. Support and encourage young people's spiritual development. Establish alternative youth justice programs. Increase young peoples' knowledge of the law. Help social support agencies find common ground to work together.

[3] For more detailed information on youth crime and justice issues, see Statistics Canada (1997) *A Profile of Youth Justice in Canada* (Cat no. 85-544-XPE); also visit the Department of Justice Web site at: *http://canada.justice.gc.ca*

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] National Crime Prevention Council (1997) *Preventing Crime by Investing in Families and Communities: Promoting Positive Outcomes in Youth Twelve to Eighteen Years Old.* NCPC Models for children 0 to 6, and 6 to 12 are included in the *Policy Framework for Addressing Crime Prevention and Children Ages 0 to 12.*

Level	Goals	Means
Family	Improve parenting skills and child-rearing practices.	Eliminate abusive child-rearing practices. Encourage use of appropriate and non-violent discipline techniques. Teach skills to help reduce inter-parental conflict. Eliminate sibling violence. Support parents to respond to youths in crisis. Provide local supports or services for families requiring assistance. Encourage healing of whole community.
	Provide stable living environments for youths in care and after leaving care.	Provide support and training for caregivers. Develop placement criteria sensitive to cultural backgrounds of youths. Provide integrated service support and continuity of care. Provide follow up and continuing support for young people leaving care.
School	Build academic and social skills and reduce aggressive behaviour.	Teach skills for interpersonal problem-solving. Provide mental health counselling. Distinguish between youths whose antisocial behaviour starts in early or late teens. Use alternative teaching methods. Facilitate school transitions. Establish peer-mentoring/tutoring and self-help programs. Conduct routine school safety audits. Provide media literacy programs. Provide parenting programs. Provide substance abuse, early pregnancy and gang prevention programs. Form supportive working partnerships with parents.
	Promote a positive social environment in the school.	Promote change in the whole school environment. Provide anti-bias education. Provide appropriate training and professional development to teachers. Promote student involvement in school planning.
	Facilitate the transition from school to work or further education.	Provide co-op education programs. Provide paid or unpaid work experience and work education. Offer more flexible school hours. Reduce financial barriers to further education and job training.
Peers	Promote positive peer relations.	Provide supervised recreation programs.
Community	Build stronger and healthier communities.	Encourage use of public spaces and facilities. Encourage youth volunteerism. Link seniors and elders with youth. Conduct community resource audits. Encourage grassroots crime prevention.
	Use a focused approach to crime prevention.	Develop broad-based support and community consensus about causes of crime and solutions.
	Reflect diversity and inclusiveness in community development efforts to prevent youth crime.	Obtain broad public input into crime prevention efforts. Build a working relationship with the local media. Encourage youth involvement in political decision making.
	Prevent youth homelessness.	Provide local support programs and outreach.

As the above reveals, there is considerable evidence on which to focus crime prevention efforts concerning youth. Community-based, prevention and intervention approaches that are sensitive to the characteristics of youth, their families and communities, focus on the needs and abilities of youth, and foster youth engagement and participation can yield significant benefits. Approaches that focus on reducing these risks can help to reduce victimization and contribute to long-term reductions in youth crime rates. A preventive approach demands broad involvement from many sectors and the development of partnerships. This may include community-based, universally available programs that support pro-social development and include youth at risk. Community-based programs that are targeted toward families and communities with youth who are at risk or who have engaged in offending behaviour are another.

Preventive action can occur in a variety of contexts, can be directed to specific goals and use specific means. In Phase II, the National Strategy has the opportunity to support communities in their efforts to address the multiple risk factors that contribute to victimization of youth and the onset of criminal behaviour.

3. THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY ON COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

A. Overview

Phase II of the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention identifies youth as a *priority*. The Strategy provides the opportunity to build on past accomplishments, link ongoing efforts, and create further momentum to address crime prevention and youth within Canadian communities.

The Strategy is premised on the following concepts:

- crime prevention through social development, with a focus on the root causes of crime; and,
- a "balanced approach" to solving crime problems, which includes social development and opportunities reduction activities.

Phase II has a special emphasis on building partnerships, and supporting community-designed and implemented crime prevention initiatives. The Strategy is based on the understanding that many players—individuals, organizations, institutions, communities, governments and the private sector—can play a critical role in advancing crime prevention through social development. The Strategy is one of myriad ways to strengthen community capacity to address crime prevention issues affecting youth. The Policy Framework for Addressing Crime Prevention and Youth emphasizes social development strategies and root causes, with the desired end effect of fostering the pro-social development of youth.

The National Strategy utilizes several mechanisms.

The **Safer Communities Initiative** includes four program components: the Community Mobilization Program, the Investment Fund, the Partnership Program and the Business Action Program.

The Community Mobilization Program focuses on supporting communities to develop comprehensive and sustainable crime prevention activities that address *root causes* of crime. The program fosters collaborative community-level partnerships, public awareness, and capacity building within diverse communities. The Program is intended to build upon crime prevention activities that are already under way throughout the country. The involvement of provincial/territorial governments, through Joint Management Committees, is key.[6] The Program recognizes that communities are at different developmental stages in addressing crime. Some need to find ways to develop the basic infrastructure to begin planning. Others already have established goals, objectives and activities in place. The Program is designed to provide support and investment that is tailored to the specific needs of communities, including needs assessment, planning, training, information dissemination, skills development, conflict resolution, consensus development or evaluation.

The Investment Fund focuses on building and sharing knowledge about effective crime prevention initiatives in Canada. The Fund supports selected demonstration, research and evaluation projects across Canada. These projects will help decision makers and practitioners identify, evaluate and share information about innovative models of crime prevention. In particular, the Fund supports research and evaluation that assesses the costs, benefits and overall effectiveness of comprehensive efforts to prevent crime and victimization in different environments and circumstances. This knowledge will help to develop new programs and make improvements to existing programs, ultimately creating a more cost-effective, integrated approach to crime prevention in Canada.

The Partnership Program focuses on supporting the direct involvement of non-governmental organizations (national and international) in community crime prevention initiatives. The Program helps such organizations to provide information, tools and resources that will help communities get involved in, and share information on, crime prevention initiatives. The Program supports activities such as needs assessment tools, expert advice and consultation; seminars and conferences; training and professional development on delivering community-based crime prevention programming; research and development of community resources and materials; and the development of monitoring and evaluation tools for crime prevention programs.

The Business Action Program focuses on building and expanding the commitment of the private sector to reduce crime and improve community safety. It is designed to encourage business and professional communities to become more involved in making Canadian communities safer. The Program supports activities that will raise awareness of crime

[6] Each Committee includes representatives of the provincial/territorial government, the federal government, and other partners and community members involved in crime prevention initiatives.

prevention as well as foster business support and involvement in crime prevention, including the provision of resources, tools and supports that will help to improve the quality of life in Canadian communities.

In addition, the **Promotion and Public Education Program** is designed to increase awareness and knowledge about crime and victimization and effective responses to them. The Program challenges Canadians of all ages and walks of life to be active in creating a safer environment for themselves, their families and neighbours. The Program supports the dissemination of "lessons learned" from projects funded through the National Strategy.

4. KEY POLICY CONCERNS

A. Interplay among Risk Factors at Individual, Family and Community Levels

It is widely accepted that the presence of and interplay among risk factors is linked to or associated with criminal behaviour during adolescence and in later life stages. This interplay is complex and there are no clear, linear lines of cause and effect.

Research is continually refining our understanding of the role and interplay of risk factors in crime and victimization and what policies and programs would be effective in addressing these factors. Risk factors that are present during childhood and adolescence and relate to family, individual, peer, school and community influences, as well as factors that contribute to positive outcomes are detailed in Appendix A. Cultural norms and trends also contribute to the social acceptance of or indifference to certain forms of crimes against—or offending behaviours perpetrated by—youth. Gender is also a key factor, as the frequency and nature of offending behaviour among young men is much different than that of young women.[7]

It is also recognized that the presence of more than one risk factor may increase risk of victimization in certain circumstances. The presence or combination of risk factors in a given situation may also affect an individual's propensity to engage in offending behaviour. The presence of multiple risk factors produces the greatest levels of risk. Interventions that address multiple risk factors are therefore most desirable.

B. Key Challenges

In recent years, there has been growing acceptance that a comprehensive set of multi-layered strategies—that span from individual to societal levels—is needed to prevent youth victimization and reduce the likelihood that youth living in situations of risk will

[7] According to Statistics Canada's Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, in 1997, 77% of criminal charges involving youth involved male offenders; 23% involved female offenders. Overall, this pattern of criminal charges against young women (12 to 18) has remained relatively constant since 1986. (L. MacLeod, Working Paper on Girls as Victims and Offender, National Crime Prevention Centre.)

engage in criminal behaviour during adolescence or in later life stages. Many policy areas, such as health, social, housing, the economy and the justice system, have a bearing on crime prevention. To develop an integrated approach, strategies that address underlying societal factors such as poverty and unemployment, abuse and neglect, inadequate schooling and housing—as well as strategies that address more immediate individual, family and community risk factors—need to be linked to crime prevention policy.

From the perspective of the Strategy, which emphasizes a crime prevention through social development approach, the primary task is to identify the changeable risk factors associated with crime and victimization and support the development and implementation of crime prevention solutions that involve individuals, families and community.

Collaboration and partnership development across sectors and disciplines is also an important component, because this form of development builds integration.

The key challenges for the Strategy are in:

- building complementary languages and visions of crime prevention through social development across sectors and disciplines;
- identifying effective ways to reduce or minimize the multiplicity of risk factors associated with crime and victimization affecting youth;
- fostering the development of a repertoire of appropriate tools to address situations of risk related to crime and victimization—at individual, family and community levels; and,
- fostering the integration of efforts across sectors and disciplines, given the mandate and scope of the youth justice system and the range of youth-serving resources available at the community level—whose efforts contribute to crime prevention.

C. Optimal Points of Intervention

Given the range of issues and players involved in preventing youth crime and victimization what are the optimal points of intervention for the Strategy? Comprehensive approaches are required to cover the "waterfront" of prevention—from school-based, gender-sensitive anti-violence prevention programs, to targeted programs aimed at high-risk/high-need youth (young men and young women) who are engaged in escalating offending behaviour. This effort requires a range of resources, disciplines and players beyond those in the justice system, and coordination of mandates and resources. The Strategy's particular "niche" is focused on crime and victimization issues from a secondary prevention perspective.[8] Supporting Canadian communities in their efforts to help youth living in multiple risk situations that contribute to crime and victimization is one of the Strategy's priorities.

[8] The National Strategy does not fund the youth justice area, which has its own *Young Offenders Act* funding.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Policy Framework for Addressing Crime Prevention and Youth Ages 12 to 18 rests on the following principles:

1. Focus on youth and their families who are living in conditions of multiple risk.

The Strategy is designed to promote crime prevention through social development, focusing on the conditions of risk that are associated with crime and victimization. Youth who are living in conditions of multiple risk are at higher risk of engaging in high-risk/offending behaviour throughout adolescence and into adulthood. A focus on supporting at risk youth, families and communities so that they can minimize or reduce multiple risk factors that contribute to crime and victimization is therefore effective use of the Strategy's resources.

2. Recognize and reflect difference and diversity among youth, their families and their communities.

The Strategy should reflect the difference and diversity that exists among youth, their living situations, their families and their communities. It should reflect and seek to further understand the differences in experience that relate to factors such as age, gender, race, culture, Aboriginal status, sexual orientation, class background, disability, homelessness, abuse and victimization, addiction/fetal alcohol effects (FAE), mental health conditions/disorders, unemployment, involvement in the sex trade, among others. In order to reflect diversity, it should demonstrate flexibility in the definition of "family" and acknowledge the important role of peers. It must also reflect the reality that many youth at risk live marginally in society. It should recognize that communities are at different stages of development and be flexible and enable tailored approaches to meet evolving community needs. The unique needs of Aboriginal youth, their families and communities should be considered.

3. Integrate an understanding of the gendered dimension of risk and work toward gender-sensitive solutions.

There are gender specific differences in the experiences of young men and women, including exposure to and interplay among risk factors. These manifest in gender-specific patterns of victimization and behaviour. It is critical that the Strategy be grounded in an understanding of the gendered dimension risk, settings and situations, and work toward gender-sensitive solutions.

4. Engage and sustain the participation of youth—and their support systems—in the process.

The Strategy should include a commitment to actively engage youth in addressing crime problems that affect them as victims or as offenders. This commitment must include the development of strategies that engage formal and informal supports, such as peers,

families and youth-serving agencies. This commitment should involve youth in, or leaving care. This respectful, participatory, empowerment approach is consistent with the principles of crime prevention through social development and will enhance outcomes.

5. **Engage and sustain community participation in crime prevention issues affecting youth.**

The National Strategy provides an opportunity for communities to innovate and build capacity. It also raises the challenge of finding ways to sustain activity following discontinuation of federal funding. Ways to foster sustainability—including linkages with other community institutions or structures, such as recreational facilities, libraries, cultural centres, etc., need to be considered at the outset of new project work.

6. **Strengthen collaboration across disciplines and sectors involved in the pro-social development of youth.**

   Canada's Youth Justice Renewal Strategy and the proposed *Youth Criminal Justice Act* recognize that the protection of society is, first and foremost, achieved by preventing crime. The Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention can dovetail with both child protection and youth justice systems, by helping to strengthen collaborative approaches to preventing crime and victimization at the community level. This may involve fostering new ideas, opportunities and partnerships across disciplines and sectors such as justice, health, education, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Efforts supported by the Strategy are best integrated with community-based social support systems (both formal and informal) that exist—or can be developed—to help youth. The use of formal and informal mechanisms to reach out to and engage youth should be encouraged. Collaborative interventions at the community level should fully consider the multiple needs of at-risk youth.

7. **Link with other frameworks, strategies or mechanisms that can contribute to optimum social development of youth.**

   To facilitate a horizontal approach to crime prevention, it is necessary to develop linkages with other players who have key roles in addressing issues related to crime prevention and youth. The National Children's Agenda (NCA) recognizes the need for a range of activities to promote and support the healthy development of children and youth. This includes efforts to support parents and strengthen families, enhance childhood development and learning experiences, improve income security, and support safe, nurturing environments. The Strategy's contribution to the NCA involves a particular focus on multiple risk situations that contribute to victimization and offending behaviour during adolescence, and that may lead to continued criminal behaviour later in life. The view is to foster integrated approaches, and to that end, linkages with other levels of government and sectors are critical.

Linkages, where appropriate, should be made with a range of:

- federal government initiatives that support the healthy and pro-social development of youth in Canada[9];

- provincial and territorial strategies that aim to improve the healthy and pro-social development of youth in Canada, including preventive, supportive, and protective strategies;

- Aboriginal community policies, initiatives and programs that aim to improve the quality of community life for Aboriginal youth and foster engagement in community development activities;

- community-based policies, initiatives and programs that aim to improve the quality of community life for youth and foster their engagement in community development activities;

- international action that aims to advance the well-being and pro-social development of youth in society.

8. Strengthen the internal cohesion of the Strategy.

The Strategy identifies the following priority target groups: children, youth, Aboriginal populations and women. There are multiple points of intersection among all of these groups and within each funding component of the Strategy. Solutions that respect diversity must also be considered throughout all aspects of the Strategy.

6. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

A. Goal

The goal of the Policy Framework is to:

- ***Foster community action and promote conditions that will prevent youth victimization and the probability of current or later life criminal behaviour.***

B. Objectives

The specific objectives are to build on identified factors and conditions that contribute to youth victimization and the risk of engaging in criminal behaviour by:

- supporting communities in developing and testing strategies to address factors and conditions that place youth at risk;

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[9] For a list of federal government programs and services, refer to: Status of Women Canada, *Guide to Federal Government Programs and Services for Women 1999-2000* and Health Canada, *Guide to Federal Government Services for Children and Youth 1999.*

- identifying and promoting "best practices" within communities that can reduce or minimize factors and conditions that place youth at risk of victimization, or that may lead to criminal behaviour;
- identifying and promoting conditions that produce pro-social individuals, families and communities that will help to prevent crime.

Informal and formal support systems in the community—families, peers, and organizations—play a critical role in efforts to reach these objectives.

C. Priority Focus

Community safety, secure family environments and the positive social development of youth are linked in many ways. The presence of direct and linked risk factors that undermine the personal security of youth therefore need to be addressed from various perspectives and requires collaboration among various players. The National Strategy's focus is on developing community-based ways to address issues related to youth living in conditions of multiple risk. This may include social development strategies focusing on the following:

- Youth and their families living in situations where risk factors (or combinations of risk factors) are present in the home, such as violence and abuse; substance use and/or addiction; disorganized, criminal lifestyle exercised by family members; and siblings who have exhibited serious behavioural difficulties. Strategies that focus on youth and their families living in situations of relative disadvantage, or who are marginalized due to factors such as race, Aboriginal status, class background, disability, unemployment, homelessness, and addiction/fetal alcohol effects (FAE), mental health disorders, involvement in sex trade, among others, as well as youth and families living in communities that are at high risk and/or in high need[10] are priority considerations.

- Youth who are at risk of coming into conflict with the law. This may include youth who displayed problem behaviours, (e.g., bullying, aggressive and disruptive behaviour) as children who continue to display behavioural problems in adolescence; youth who display a late onset of aggressive behaviour; youth with anti-social peers and/or association with gangs, and; young offenders who are at risk of reoffending. FAE and substance abuse are also considerations. It is important to note that behavioural signs may vary by factors such as age, developmental stage and gender.

Situational crime prevention approaches in combination with social development crime prevention models may also be considered for specific youth offence patterns in

[10] High-risk or high-need communities include communities where personal security risks are high, and may include rural or isolated communities where specific needs concerning children and their families have not been addressed or are only now emerging. It may include communities where there are few early intervention supports for children and families (formal and/or informal) available. It also includes communities experiencing rapid or disconcerting change, communities experiencing or nearing crisis, etc.

communities, such as car theft, break and enter, impaired driving, hate crimes and "street-related" crimes such as assault and drug-trade related crimes.

Link to other Priority Foci of the Strategy

Addressing crime prevention issues related to Aboriginal youth, their families and communities is a particular priority focus of the Strategy.

7. COMPONENTS

The components described below reflect the previously identified priorities and are based on recognized model strategies. Refer also to Appendix B for additional detail.

A. Public Awareness and Education

Public awareness and education is necessary to ensure that society appreciates the need for and benefits of investing in youth from a crime prevention perspective. Public awareness and education can help build shared community responsibility for youth who are living in conditions of multiple risk and to foster responsibility among youth for their behaviour. Ongoing public awareness and education needs to make the links between community safety and the positive social development of youth, between situations of risk and crime prevention, and also needs to promote the importance of protective factors such as family and community support are needed. Public awareness and education is also needed to dispel myths concerning the nature of youth crime (particularly to differentiate between minor forms of offending and serious offending), provide accurate information on issues such as youth gangs, address negative perceptions of youth and prevent stigmatization, and, most importantly, promote positive action that instills hope and a sense of self-efficacy.

There are opportunities from the community level to the national level to support public awareness and education, with a particular emphasis on culturally appropriate community-based activities that respect difference and diversity among youth, their families and communities.

Focus	Rationale	Remarks
National Level	National efforts to build and support public awareness and education of the importance of investment in youth from a crime prevention perspective are needed (e.g., positive social development of youth and community are linked).	Links with other federal, provincial and territorial public awareness and education activities, (e.g., the National Children's Agenda, Youth Employment Strategy, Homeless Strategy, Family Violence Initiative, youth health) to ensure a complementary approach, promote crime prevention messages and avoid duplication. Could include public, NGO and private sector involvement. Utilize existing mechanisms such as the Promotion and Public Education Program to promote ideas, best practices, etc.
Community Level	Community involvement in prevention education efforts engages citizens and ensures a responsive approach.	Mechanisms such as the Community Mobilization Program are ideally positioned to support public education and awareness, particularly in communities that do not have well-developed or integrated services to address at-risk youth. There should be an emphasis on mechanisms that will enable youth themselves to share ideas and learn from each other's experiences. The participation of community institutions of relevance to youth, their families and support systems, (e.g., youth-for-youth organizations, health centres, libraries, recreation centres, schools) as well as alternative institutions (e.g., teen drop-in centres, street youth organizations) should be included.

Primary Funding Mechanism—National level: NCPC; Community level: Community Mobilization Program.

B. Comprehensive Strategies and Models

Comprehensive strategies and models involve a range of players and offer integrated approaches to service delivery in communities. Such strategies and models targeted to situations where youth are living in conditions of multiple risk need to be developed and tested. This should include a focus on community-development processes designed to build pro-social individuals, families and communities. The process would include investment of multiple funding partners and rigorous assessment/audit of a community's crime prevention needs as well as planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Communities may be at different stages of development and may consequently need to consider different approaches to infrastructure development, capacity building, partnership development and implementation. In some communities a build "from the ground up" approach may be required. In others, there may be existing programs or

services that could be tested and evaluated as potential models. Under either scenario, a systematic, rigorous approach to model development and testing should be followed.

Of high priority for this component are rigorous strategies and models at the following levels:

At the community level—

- "inner city" communities, with a particular focus on at-risk youth and their families who experience relative disadvantage or marginalization (e.g., Aboriginal youth,[11] visible minority youth, among others);

- northern and/or isolated communities, with a particular focus on at-risk youth and their families who experience relative disadvantage and/or marginalization.

At a targeted level—

- youth exiting from care and/or custody, who often remain at-high risk of victimization and of coming into conflict with the law.

The Strategy will support efforts to build models and strategies that can meet the needs of these youth. Linkages with existing provincial/territorial and community support systems are essential.

Primary Funding Mechanism—Community Mobilization Program and/or Investment Fund.

C. Tools and Resource Development

The development of a range of tools and resources that will facilitate community development and action to prevent the likelihood that at-risk youth will engage in adolescent and/or later life criminal behaviour should be supported.

Primary Funding Mechanism—Partnership Program can be used to develop, refine and promote tools that help communities develop and sustain comprehensive strategies.

D. Research and Knowledge Development

A unique contribution of the Strategy would be to broaden and deepen understanding of how to prevent victimization and the onset and/or escalation of offending behaviour among youth at risk. Knowledge development must address difference and diversity issues, and must include gender-specific/gender-sensitive research. The Strategy should

[11] For example, a focus on Aboriginal youth could be considered in inner city communities such as Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, and Winnipeg.

build linkages to researchers within the academic community who are working on youth crime prevention and victimization, and on community/social development.
The intention of the Strategy would be to address issues that can enhance policy and program development. A community-based focus or application—and an evaluation component—would be essential features of the research.

Potential areas for research and knowledge development must consider difference and diversity issues such as gender, race, culture, Aboriginal status, immigration/refugee status, disability, sexual orientation. Topic areas include, but are not limited to:

- research to identify "best practices" in various areas of intervention;
- conceptual and applied research on situations of risk and on protective factors;
- research and development of tools to aid in the identification of youth at high risk of victimization and/or offending, including tools that are sensitive to diversity;
- identification of gaps in knowledge about interventions for youth and conduct research and evaluation to fill those gaps;
- research and development of tools, models and approaches regarding Aboriginal youth and their families to aid the development of effective responses;
- alternative research (e.g., participatory research studies, qualitative studies, descriptive studies) that will provide youth, families and communities with an opportunity to voice their concerns, and develop, implement and evaluate solutions;
- diversity-sensitive research (including gender sensitive work) on existing prevention models and programs targeted to "youth."

Note: there would need to be a corresponding "dissemination/promotion" component via the NCPC for any research or knowledge products produced. For example, "best practices" information gathered through research and demonstration will be made accessible through the Public Education and Promotion Program of the Strategy.

Primary Funding Mechanism—National Level: NCPC; Community Mobilization Program and Investment Fund as appropriate.

8. FUNDING OVERVIEW

An overview of the priorities, activities, and related considerations is provided in Appendix B: Funding Focus.

APPENDIX A

1. **Crime Prevention and Childhood Experiences, Situations and Potential Adverse Consequences**
2. **Factors that Contribute to Positive Outcomes for Children and Youth**

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1. Crime Prevention and Childhood Experiences, Situations and Potential Adverse Consequences

Experiences and Situations	Potential Adverse Consequences
Prenatal Experience:	
Inadequate nutrition, exposure to substances such as smoking, alcohol and drugs, violence and abuse directed at the expectant mother.	Low birth weight, fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), fetal alcohol effects (FAE), post-natal addiction, physical disabilities, cognitive deficits, learning difficulties, and other dispositional attributes (e.g., sociability, intelligence and activity) may be affected, leading to difficulties with child development tasks.
Family Situation:	
Parental isolation, young age of parents, insufficient parental understanding of the needs of babies and child development, insufficient parenting skills, low level of parent-child attachment.	Child maltreatment, injury, abuse and neglect. Inadequate cognitive and emotional stimulation to promote healthy development.
The presence of violence in the home.	Exposure to violence, in particular violence directed toward the mother may place girls at higher risk of becoming victimized within their own intimate relationships and may place boys at higher risk of becoming perpetrators within their own intimate relationships.
Exposure to negative or ineffective parenting styles/behaviours (including inappropriate/inconsistent use of discipline, abuse, neglect, rejecting, cold, uncaring or inconsistent parenting style, parental criminality, parental substance abuse/addiction, disorganized, criminal lifestyle within the family).	Uncaring, inconsistent parenting/caregiving may undermine individual sense of self-worth and well-being. Inappropriate role modelling (e.g., parenting style and behaviours, lifestyle behaviour such as substance abuse) sends wrong messages about acceptable behaviour within interpersonal relationships (including gender relationships).
Exposure to negative behaviours/ influences by other family members (e.g. siblings)	Victimization, including sexual assault, physical assault, and other forms of abuse may cause physical, intellectual and psychological harm and interfere with child development tasks. Victimization may lead to the use of inappropriate coping mechanisms among children, e.g., direct and indirect aggressive, bullying behaviour, running away, self-destructive behaviour, difficulties at school. These behavioural patterns, including their frequency and severity, vary by factors such as age, development stage and gender.
Individual Situation:	
Hyperactivity Conduct disorders Disabilities Conditions such as FAE	Individual health and social development factors may contribute to learning and behavioural problems, increase the risk of victimization, failure to learn alternatives to aggression, self-destructive behaviour, increased risk of engaging in offending behaviours throughout future life stages (adolescence and adulthood). Adolescents with "behavioural" problems are also at higher risk of other life problems such as unemployment, poor physical and mental health. Patterns vary by factors such as age, developmental stage and gender.

Experiences and Situations	Potential Adverse Consequences
Peer Relationships:	
Anti-social, pro-crime peers Peers who engage in risk-taking behaviours e.g. substance abuse Peer rejection Peer discrimination (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, race, ability)	Association with anti-social, pro-crime peers may contribute to risk-taking/offending behaviours. Peer rejection and discrimination reinforces isolation and undermines individual identity and community attachment. Patterns vary by factors such as age, developmental stage and gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc.
Societal Conditions/Environments:	
Inadequate social/economic conditions and supports Societal values concerning gender roles Discrimination (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, culture, disability) Exposure to media violence	Inadequate social and economic conditions and supports, e.g., lack of adequate support for prenatal health, parenting child care, employment, housing, recreational opportunities, schools undermine healthy development. Community breakdown, lack of community identity and sense of citizenship. Societal values that undermine diversity and equal participation contribute to patterns of power, dominance and control. Media violence reinforces acceptability of violence as a way to resolve conflicts.

2. Factors that Contribute to Positive Outcomes for Children and Youth

Level	Factors that Contribute to Positive Outcomes
Individual	Active, positive engagement and participation in family, school and community activity. Motivated, committed to learning. Pro-social values (e.g., caring, respect, equality, social justice, responsibility). Social age-appropriate competencies (e.g., problem-solving skills, conflict resolution skills, emotion management, positive coping skills, interpersonal skills, resistance skills). Good self-esteem and sense of identity and self-worth. Trust, optimism and a sense of hope. Sense of personal empowerment, self-reliance and independence.
Family	Supportive family environment (prenatal—adulthood). Positive family communication. Positive family role models and healthy behaviours. Family sets clear, age-appropriate behavioural expectations and consequences and monitors child's whereabouts . Affectionate ties or bonds with a family member, e.g., parent, grandparent, sibling, foster individual resiliency. Parental engagement in child's development, e.g., involvement in schooling, sports, recreation. Family attitudes/actions that value children and youth. Family attitudes/actions that respect and value identity, diversity and equality (e.g., gender, culture, ability, sexual orientation).
Peers	Friends who model pro-social, responsible behaviour. Positive peer influence.
Community	Positive adult role models. Supportive other adult relationships. Caring neighbours . Safe and caring neighbourhoods. Caring, respectful school environment that provides clear expectations, rules and consequences. Community attitudes/action that value children and youth. Community attitudes/action that respect and value identity, diversity and equality (gender, culture, ability, sexual orientation, etc.). Strategies that support child/youth engagement and participation. Access to formal supports through institutions such as schools, recreational centres, spiritual centres, etc.. Access and/or exposure to pro-social ways of resolving problems (e.g., violence prevention programs, conflict resolution strategies). Opportunities for self-expression (e.g., through recreation, culture).

APPENDIX B

Policy Framework for Crime Prevention and Youth: Funding Focus

Overview

The focus of the youth crime prevention strategy is to support:

- activities that target *risk factors associated with victimization of, and offending behaviour among youth.* The Strategy can facilitate innovation by supporting the development, implementation and testing of comprehensive models and strategies particularly in community-specific settings that are at high risk or in high need.[1]

- the development of crime prevention knowledge, skills, resources and activities within "high-risk/high-need" communities where youth victimization and/or youth crime is of concern.

- the development of crime prevention knowledge, skills, resources and activities to address crime prevention and victimization issues of particular concern to at-risk populations of youth within various communities and where multiple risk factors are present.

- the ongoing development and evaluation of comprehensive models and strategies and the identification of "best practices" to address crime prevention concerns related to youth (from victimization and offending perspectives). This should include support for approaches that are interdisciplinary and linked to the broader community, foster partnerships, engage youth, address gender and diversity issues and take into account inter-related factors (racism, sexism, ableism, etc.).

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[1] High-risk or high-need communities include communities where personal security risks are high, and may include rural or isolated communities where specific needs concerning youth and their families have not been addressed or are only now emerging. It may include communities where few supports for youth and families (formal and/or informal) are available. It also includes communities experiencing rapid or disconcerting change, communities experiencing or nearing crisis, etc.

Relationship of Crime Prevention and Youth to the National Strategy Priorities	***Community Mobilization Program***	***Investment Fund***	***Partnership Program***	***Business Action Program***
Priority focus on: ***Youth living in conditions of multiple risk***	*The Community Mobilization Program should give high priority to activities that will help to reduce situations of risk and promote protective factors, with a particular focus on situations or settings involving youth and their families living in conditions of multiple risk and youth who are at risk of coming into conflict with the law. Activities that engage at-risk youth and their communities should be a priority.* *This includes:* *Aboriginal Communities* *Rural Communities* *Isolated Communities* *Visible Minority Communities (urban and rural)* *And* Communities in or nearing crisis, (e.g., with high crime rates, presence of other socio/economic/structural factors that contribute to the victimization of youth and to youth crime).	*The Investment Fund should fund the implementation, testing and evaluation of comprehensive models and strategies that will reduce youth victimization and the risk of coming into conflict with the law, with a particular focus on the development of new or innovative models to address concerns in high-risk/high-need communities.*	*The Partnership Program should build on existing formal and informal partnerships and networks operating in many communities with the view of creating an integrated, continuum of services for at-risk youth, their families and communities. It should encourage the development of new or innovative partnerships, particularly in high-risk/high-need setting. Partnerships that engage youth or that are "youth for youth" oriented should be of priority.*	*The Business Action Program should partner with communities to work toward improving the quality of life in Canadian communities in ways that will foster the healthy, pro-social transition from childhood, to adolescence and adulthood.*

Priority Focus	Community Mobilization Program	Investment Fund	Partnership Program	Business Action Program
Youth living in conditions of multiple risk. ***Youth at risk of becoming in conflict with the law.*** *Factors such as age, gender, race, culture, Aboriginal status, sexual orientation, class background, disability, homelessness, abuse and victimization, addiction/FAE, mental health conditions/ disorders, unemployment, involvement in the sex-trade, among others, are key considerations.*	*Youth Crime Prevention Objective* To promote conditions that produce pro-social individuals, families and communities to prevent youth victimization and offending during adolescence and later life stages.	*Youth Crime Prevention Objective* To develop, evaluate and promote strategic interventions (or "best practices") that can reduce or minimize the risk factors associated with youth victimization, youth crime and the likelihood of future victmization/offending.	*Youth Crime Prevention Objective* To provide information to communities on how best to address youth victimization and youth crime issues.	*Youth Crime Prevention Objective* To raise public awareness of ways to minimize risk factors/situations that contribute to youth victimization and youth crime, to facilitate pro-social engagement of youth as they make the transition to adulthood, and to partner with the community—including youth—to improve the quality of life for youth in Canadian communities.

	Activities: Community-based activities using formal and informal mechanisms, with a particular focus on youth-oriented and/or youth for youth mechanisms. *Focus:* Needs assessments, workshops, pilot projects that engage youth and community in preventive action. *Considerations:* Must help to establish or build on existing community knowledge, skills and approaches.	*Activities:* Research and demonstration, evaluation, knowledge synthesis of community-based approaches to youth victimization/crime issues. *Focus:* Research and demonstration to identify "best practices"; demonstration and evaluation of new, innovative comprehensive models; evaluation of existing "promising" models. *Considerations:* Innovative approaches may include new approaches or the application of existing comprehensive approaches specifically to high-risk/high-need communities. Must also include gender and diversity sensitive or specific approaches. Needs to link to a process to identify and disseminate "best practices." Must help to develop comprehensive interdisciplinary models. The emphasis should be on the use of informal as well as formal networks.	*Activities:* Development of information, tools, resources to deal with community-identified concerns and issues around youth victimization and youth crime. *Focus:* Topic focus to be determined by community (involving youth) but may be wide-ranging, e.g., tools to help parents and youth-oriented service workers and advocates help/support youth through adolescence, tools to support youth, facilitate peer support/mentoring. *Considerations:* Projects must have youth involvement. Must be gender and diversity sensitive or specific. Projects must involve an element of community/partnership and capacity development.	*Activities:* Private sector partnership development and support for engagement of youth living in situations of risk as well as support for community activities (e.g. recreation) that facilitate pro-social behaviour. *Focus:* Foster awareness of the effective parenting and effective community interaction with youth. Establish strategies and incentives for the development of family-friendly, flexible and supportive work environments, sensitive to the needs of parents with adolescents. Establish and implement employment strategies that will assist youth, particularly youth living in situations of risk, including youth living independently of family. *Considerations:* Projects must have youth involvement. Activity focus to be determined by the community. Must be gender and diversity sensitive or specific.

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